

Amendments to the Claims:

This following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of analyzing plasma from a sample of whole blood, comprising:
 - a) ~~obtaining~~ collecting the sample of whole blood from a subject ~~in~~ directly into a container, said container comprising a first end and a second end, said first end of the container for receiving the sample of whole blood and being sealed;
 - b) centrifuging said container under conditions to separate said whole blood into a cell layer, a gel layer and a plasma layer, wherein said centrifuging produces in relative juxtaposition the first end of the container, the cell layer, the gel layer, the plasma layer and the second end of the container; and
 - c) inserting into a spectrophotometric device said second end of the container which comprises the plasma layer in closest relative juxtaposition, to analyze the plasma from the whole blood.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said container comprises a Vacutainer or a similar receptacle for collecting blood from a subject.
3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2, wherein said Vacutainer comprises a septum at the first end.
4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 3, wherein the septum comprises a rubber septum.
5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said sample of whole blood ~~comprises~~ is present in an amount of from about 1 ml to about 10 ml in said container.

6. (Original) The method of claim 5, wherein said step of centrifuging comprise centrifuging said sample at about 1000 x g.
7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein said step of centrifuging comprises centrifuging said sample for between about 5 to about 10 minutes.
8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said step of centrifuging is performed under refrigerated conditions.
9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein said refrigerated conditions comprise a temperature from about 0°C to about 20°C.
10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said container is of a shape and said whole blood sample is of a volume such that said step of centrifuging provides a plasma layer of at least 3 mm or more when said container is vertical.
11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said step of centrifuging is performed in a fixed angle rotor or a swing arm rotor.
12. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein said step of centrifuging is performed in a swing arm rotor.
13. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said container comprise one or more cylindrical, conical, frustoconical, oval, or rectangular shapes, or a combination thereof.
14. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the second end of the container is substantially flat-bottomed.

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15. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the container is sealed with a septum.
16. (New) The method of claim 15, wherein the septum comprises a rubber septum.